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ABSTRACT

This paper investigated whether male and female college teachers exhibit differences in the way in which they manage authority in the classroom. The hypothesis was that sex differences in classroom authority management were likely to exist for two reasons. First, female professors would have to adopt masculine sex-typed styles of interaction in order to be viewed as legitimate holders of authority in spite of their lesser female status. Second, male professors, although they hold a position which is consistent with their status as males, would experience a conflict between male authoritarian behavior and the cultural norms of a teaching culture in which accessibility to students and an interactive classroom atmosphere are expected. Data consisted of a sample of 15 female and 15 male professors at a large state university. Participants were matched with regard to academic rank, disciplinary orientation, and sex-ratio of department. The method involved interviewing participants about perceptions of their own authority, and about four common classroom management problems--inattentiveness, overt disruption, challenging competency, and lack of student participation. Findings from an analysis of questionnaire responses indicated that rank and sex were related to responses regarding management problems. At the assistant and associate levels, women used strategies that reduced their appearance of authority as they attempted to legitimate it; men, on the other hand, employed a more direct and authoritarian style in dealing with management problems. Few differences were found between men and women at the level of full professor since both used techniques that reflected their senior status. (DB)

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CLASSROOM AUTHORITY MANAGEMENT OF MALE AND FEMALE UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

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Abstract

This paper examines whether male and female professors hold qualitatively different positions because of sex-saliency by analyzing their experiences in managing their authority in the classroom. A purposive sample of fifteen female professors at a large state university was selected and matched to fifteen male professors on rank, disciplinary orientation, and sex-ratio of department. These faculty members were interviewed using an open-ended questionnaire. Results revealed no differences based on sex-ratio or disciplinary orientation. However, rank and sex were related to the responses of faculty to management problems. At the assistant and associate levels women used strategies that reduced their appearance of authority as they attempted to legitimate it. In contrast, men assistants and associates employed a more direct and authoritarian style in

dealing with these problems. Few differences existed between men and women at the level of full professor since both used techniques that reflected their senior status. These results are discussed in terms of theoretical literature regarding status inconsistency and role conflict.

CLASSROOM AUTHORITY MANAGEMENT OF MALE AND FEMALE UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

Sociologists have recognized that although individuals may ostensibly occupy the same position, if those individuals have different master statuses, e.g., sex, race, age and ethnicity, they may be responded to differently, and consequently, their performance pressures and role expectations may be qualitatively different. This paper examines whether male and female professors hold qualitatively different positions because of sex-saliency by analyzing the experiences of male and female professors in the management of one aspect of their role, namely, their authority in the classroom.

The status inconsistency/role conflict literature holds that all individuals play many roles and possess certain statuses simultaneously. Often, roles have conflicting expectations and statuses have conflicting prestiges. These conflicts are supposedly problematic

for individuals; one cannot possibly perform two opposing behaviors at once,[1] nor can one simultaneously respond to two widely divergent prestige attributions.[2] A great deal of research has been directed at documenting the supposedly adverse effects these have for the individual.[3]

Sex differences in classroom authority management are likely to exist because of the role strain and status inconsistency experienced by female professors. Role expectations for females (e.g., warm, nurturant, receptive, etc.)[4] conflict with the role expectations for university professors (e.g., directive, assertive, knowledgeable, etc.). In addition, female professors are likely to suffer from status inconsistency since the university professor is given a fairly high prestige rating,[5] while the status female has low esteem.[6] However, neither sex role conflict nor status inconsistency is likely to be experienced by male university professors.

Consequently, women professors enter a position in which they may experience a chain of double-binds. First, since they are likely to be responded to in terms of their lesser status, female, they will not be viewed as <u>legitimate</u> holders of authority. To be viewed as legitimate, however, may require adopting masculine sex-typed styles of interaction which, in turn, may lead to resentment and punishment.[7]

To attenuate those interactions, they may have to increase their feminine sex-typed behaviors. However, by so doing, they may be judged incompetent,[8] and once again, not legitimately in authority.

Therefore, there are two primary authority management issues which women face. First, the establishment of their legitimacy as an authority, and second, the reduction of their appearance as an authority. These are issues which structurally and situationally, according to the literature, are not conflicts which will be experienced by male professors.

On the other hand, while male professors are in a position which is consistent with their status as male, they are also entering a teaching culture with norms regarding what constitutes "good teaching." A part of that culture is that professors should be accessible to students, not be "too authoritarian," and establish a classroom atmosphere in which interaction between student and professor is encouraged. To the extent that a male professor accepts these cultural ideas about teaching, he may find that the authority granted him because of his status, male, may interfere with or hamper his ability to generate an interactive classroom atmosphere. Consequently, he may experience a conflict between his incorporated cultural norms of "good teaching" and his authority based on his position status, and may, in order to

reduce his dissonance, develop strategies that reduce his appearance of authority. However, this conflict is fundamentally different from that hypothesized to be experienced by females because it is a qualitatively different experience to operate from a position of legitimated authority--to have the authority and choose to reduce it--than it is to not have that authority.

Consequently, in summary, it is hypothesized that female professors, more so than men will experience (1) challenges to their legitimacy and (2) expectations that they reduce their appearance of authority requiring them to devise strategies which both establish the legitimacy of their authority and reduce its appearance at the same time. (3) Male professors, however, will recognize their legitimacy as authorities, and will be able to choose between strategies varying in authoritativeness. If this is so, then clearly the work conditions of male and female professors are qualitatively different.

PROCEDURES

In order to test the saliency of sex-status and its effects on authority management among university professors, a purposive sample of fifteen (full-time regular) female professors at a large state university was selected and matched to fifteen male professors on rank (assistant, associate, full), disciplinary orientation (humanities,

social sciences, natural sciences) and sex-ratio of department (male dominated, male tilted, female dominated.)* The logic behind the sampling was to control for other variables such as stage in career, discipline and sex-ratio which might explain differences in experiences and strategies. That is, the sample was selected so that we could discover if women professors, regardless of rank, sex-ratio, and disciplinary orientation, faced similar problems and employed similar management strategies or whether other variables such as rank, discipline, and sex-ratio context overrode the saliency of sex.

These faculty members were interviewed with an open-ended questionnaire which focused on their (1) perceptions and experiences of role conflict and status inconsistency; (2) perceived benefits and costs of these conflicts; and (3) management tactics and strategies used to reduce these conflicts. Interviews took place in faculty offices, lasted between one and two hours, were tape recorded and transcribed.

As with any interview material, the "truth" of the accounts is not known. However, judging from the rapport established during the interviews, ("I want to know how other women (men) manage," "When can

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*There were no balanced sex-ratio departments. Female tilted departments (e.g., dance) were excluded because the teaching component radically differs from the liberal-arts format.

we see your results?" "Do other professors experience this?"), the direct presentation of information which was personal and potentially risky (particularly to the untenured), and the structure of the interview which permitted faculty to volunteer material rather than to react to our conceptions, we see no reason to discount the credibility of the material.

The transcripts were subjected to a content analysis by two of the researchers. All excerpts relevant to authority management were color-coded separately by two researchers, and their designations checked against each other. Since both of the researchers were involved in the theoretical formation of the study and in the interviewing, few differences in interpretive understanding emerged.

Following from the theoretical basis of the study, two primary conceptual categories were employed. These were: (1) strategies to increase the legitimacy of authority in the classroom and (2) strategies to reduce the appearance of authority in the classroom. Following the logic of content analysis, the particular indicators and examples of categories were derived from the interview materials.

In order to evaluate the hypothesis that male and female professors display authority differently, four commonly discussed classroom management problems were selected for analysis. The first management problem--<u>inattentiveness</u>--was defined as behavior indicating

students' lack of interest, but non-disruptive to the ongoing classroom atmosphere (e.g., falling asleep, reading the newspaper). The second problem--overt disruption--was defined as behavior which disturbed or inhibited the presentation of students' or professors' ideas in class (e.g., talking during a lecture, monopolizing class discussion). The third problem--challenging competency--was defined as verbal statements made by students, in class, attacking the professor's knowledge and expertise. The fourth problem--lack of student participation--was defined as students' unwillingness to interact with the professor in the classroom context (e.g., lack of class discussion, lack of questions or comments).

In addition to the fact that each was frequently mentioned by professors at all ranks, these problems were chosen because they represented four different situations in which professors could choose how to exercise their authority. Inattentiveness, for example, could be more easily ignored because it did not bother other students. Thus, professors had more discretion in deciding whether the situation warranted intervention, as well as the nature of the response. With overt disruption professors were compelled to respond, but could vary the harshness of their reprimand. Challenges to competence provided an additional element in that the professor's knowledge and accuracy were publically questioned. Finally, lack of student participation, like

inattentiveness, was a non-disruptive problem allowing professors to decide whether, as well as how, to intervene. If, as hypothesized, women are required to establish legitimacy while appearing non-authoritarian, and men may choose between strategies varying in authoritativeness, this pattern should appear in professors' responses to these situations.

PROFESSOR'S PERCEPTION OF OWN AUTHORITY

Before discussing the professors' strategies regarding specific classroom management issues, it will be useful to compare their perceptions of how they are received by students. Sex-differences and rank differences are apparent, although disciplinary orientation and sex-ratio differences are not.

Women assistant professors view themselves (probably correctly) as having to convince students that they have credibility. This perception is illustrated by the following statement of a woman in the natural sciences:

> "(I have) that attitude (which) is basically one of establishing myself as an authority figure. I have evolved this view of a professor as a person who is supposed to be really on top of a particular field...and not be whimpy about things..."

That is, it is not taken for granted that the woman is legitimately an authority figure.

In contrast, male assistant professors recognize, as one male English professor commented, "People just automatically assume that a man has more authority immediately;" or, as a male assistant professor in home and family management (Home Economics) stated, "I get from my students that they view men with Ph.D.'s as brighter and more competent than women with Ph.D.'s." When he team taught courses, for example, with women of higher rank, he commented, "I would get all the questions. It's like I was in charge of the class."

At the associate level, the women's perception of the legitimacy of their authority as an undergraduate teacher begins to attenuate. However, for some women, graduate level teaching may continue to pose problems, as this excerpt of a Humanities professor illustrates:

> "I do think the graduate students themselves expect a kind of authoritativeness that I don't give in the classroom. I don't feel comfortable with it and I think it has to do with my sex."

Difficulties with legitimacy with graduate or undergraduate students do not come up among male faculty, as documented by a male associate professor in the Humanities who stated, "I know they see me as an authority figure."

Once full professorship is obtained, however, neither males nor females express any problem regarding establishment of their legitimacy.

In contrast to the problems of establishing legitimacy, which females perceived, males repeatedly stated that their being accepted as an authority had some negative consequences for their ability to be "good teachers." At the assistant rank it expressed itself in concerns that there are "macho" expectations which the professor may not want to meet, but that if he doesn't the students will consider him ineffectual. At the associate level, some resolution seems forthcoming such as illustrated by an associate professor in the Humanities:

> "I want to partially maintain that (authority) but I also want to partially break that down so they will look for their own ideas. If I were a woman they wouldn't feel quite that authority."

Or, as an associate in social sciences stated:

> "I have to emphasize other roles (father, husband) to eliminate sex-role stereotypes. But, I teach with authority, in a masculine way."

At the full professor rank, either the male no longer cares about the issue, or there emerges what might be described as a "yearning" or a "yen" for student contact. Both a Humanities professor and a Natural Science professor, for example, commented on how they ask

students to drop around to "just talk"...and how none do.

Within this general perceptual frame, then, we turn now to classroom management strategies.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS

Inattentiveness

One common problem discussed by the professors concerned situations in which students were not paying attention, e.g., reading the newspaper, writing letters, falling asleep. Reactions to this problem varied primarily by rank, although sex differences were apparent at some levels. However, disciplinary orientation or sex-ratio of department were not apparently relevant.

Women assistant professors dealt with inattentiveness from their students by ignoring it or approaching it indirectly. Those who ignored it did so because it did not disturb other students ("I figure that they are coming to college and they are paying for it, so if that's how they want to waste their time..."). An indirect approach was to involve the offending student in a class discussion.

Men assistant professors were likely to take a direct approach by reprimanding the student in public or private. Reprimands varied from explaining how inattentiveness would hurt their grade to confronting students with the rudeness of their behavior, as in the following example:

"If a student is reading the Lantern and not paying attention I will sometimes actually physically take the paper away and either demand an apology from the student or else tell him that attendance is not required, that it is an insult for him to be doing this."

At the associate level, reactions were varied for both men and women professors. Some ignored inattentiveness--"I care but it doesn't disrupt the lecture"--while others relayed disapproval by making eye contact with the student. Further, at this level women were as likely as men to directly reprimand the student. However, the nature of women's reprimands tended to be less harsh. One woman associate professor in the hard sciences explained:

"I would just stop the student <u>after</u> class and <u>confess</u> to him that it is a bother to <u>me</u>, and that unless there is some overriding reason, I would <u>suggest</u> that if there is no way he can be attentive to the class to not come" (underline ours).

A different tone was apparent in the comments of male associates. As one Humanities professor explained:

"I tell them to take a little No-Doze before class. (I say:) 'Why do you give me your sleepy hours and give the damn bar your awake ones'."

Another reported:

> "They yawn. They read newspapers until you tell them not to. You say: 'You are welcome to read the newspaper but not in my classroom'."

At the level of full professor both men and women reported little concern over inattentiveness. A couple of people noted that they themselves had spent time as students writing letters or reading newspapers in class. But overall, the attitude among the senior faculty was that students, not professors, were responsible for maintaining interest in the classroom.

In summary, then, there are both sex and rank differences in the management of inattentiveness. Female assistants ignore the infraction or indirectly resolve it by involving the student in a classroom discussion. Male assistants reprimand. At the associate level, although both males and females reprimand the offending student, the approaches are qualitatively different. Whereas the women will gently correct the student, privately, for bothering her, the males are more harsh, directive and public in their comments. At the full professor level no sex-differences appear since none of the professors viewed inattentiveness as a problem.

Disruptions

The second problem discussed by the professors involved situations in which students disrupted the classroom atmosphere. This involved

behavior such as talking with other students during a lecture or side-talking during discussions, and monopolizing class time with constant questions or comments.

Talking during a lecture and side-talking was approached directly by all assistant professors. Women were more likely to reprimand the students in an informal, off-handed manner, seemingly designed to reduce any feelings of embarrassment. The following is an example offered by a woman in the Humanities:

> "The first few times I would do it jokingly and I might say it in terms like: 'Shut up,' 'Shut up or get out,' smiling. But if it happens often I might call them up after class and say: 'Hey look, either cut it out or don't come!."

Male assistant professors were more likely to use public embarrassment as a technique to sanction talking. These men discussed how "making a big scene" in class was an effective way to stop the offending behavior as well as preventing future incidents by setting a clear example. Statements such as: "It was very embarrassing for them" or "It was enough social embarrassment to stop it" indicated that these professors felt that embarrassing students was a legitimate way to confirm their authority in the classroom.

At the associate level, professors also dealt with the problem by reprimanding students. Women's reprimands involved the theme that they,

as professors, were disturbed by the behavior. One woman in the hard sciences explained: "I can't stand idle conversation in a large lecture and I have stopped a lecture and explained to them that I must require that they be involved in what we are doing." Another related an incident in which she required two students to sit apart during classes to prevent further disturbances to her teaching.

The men associate professors' reprimands emphasized that the talking was disruptive to the other students in the class. This involved statements such as: "It's difficult for other people;" "It's causing us a problem if there is a second conversation going on;" and "You are probably disturbing other students."

At the level of full professor, disruptive talking was dealt with directly and in class by a simple statement asking the student to either stop or leave. Absent from these reprimands were justifications for delivering them, i.e., you are bothering me, you are bothering other students. The following are some examples:

> "I told the person in class that if they want to come to class they shouldn't carry on private conversations" (man--humanities)
>
> "(I say) 'If you want to talk to each other go out in the hall and talk. You are welcome to leave any time you want'." (woman--social science)

In addition, full professors seemed to encounter this problem less frequently than associate and assistant faculty.

Disruptions of the classroom atmosphere, according to the professors, also occurred when a student monopolized teacher/student interaction. As one associate man in the social sciences explained, "Sometimes you get a student who has to answer every question." All the professors, regardless of sex, rank, discipline or sex-ratio, handled this problem in a similar manner. They would speak privately to the student, asking him or her to save questions or comments for after class. Further, the professors report not being wholly satisfied with their eventual resolution of the problem. The following is a typical example given by an associate man in the humanities:

> "I had this one guy that myself and the TA's nicknamed 'The Pest.' The problem was that usually his questions did not pertain to what we were dealing with that day or that week or whatever. I don't think I handled it very well because I let him continue with it for about two weeks. And by the end of two weeks whenever he raised his hand the rest of the class just groaned audibly. Finally, I took him aside at the end of two weeks and asked him when he had questions, would he think about them a little more. And if he thought that they were still important questions to please come in during my office hours."

Handling disruptions involving talking during a lecture in class, then, also differed by rank and sex. Female assistant professors reprimanded students in a friendly, conciliatory way whereas male assistant professors publicly embarrassed the disrupter. Associate women discussed the disruption with the student as personally problematic for her whereas male associates told the student s/he was bothering other students. Only at the full professor level was there a convergence: both males and females publicly stopped the disrupting student(s) and did not, apparently, soft-pedal or justify their responses to disruptive behavior. However, there were no differences in how professors handled the classroom monopolizer. They discussed the issue with him/her after class once the problem had become habitual and entrenched.

Challenges to Competency

The third management problem involved dealing with students who verbally challenged a professor's competency. Responses to this situation revealed some interesting sex and rank-related differences, although no disciplinary or sex-ratio differences emerged.

Challenges were seldom reported by women assistant professors, and the few who mentioned them interpreted them positively. One woman in home economics explained, "I guess I'd like to see more of that. To me it says that they are thinking, they are moving, they are

questioning." Another woman in the humanities felt that, "To me, the best thing that could happen in a class would be for them to disagree entirely with me and open the book and try to prove to me that I'm wrong." However, two assistant level women mentioned non-verbal student behaviors that they interpreted as challenges. One explained, "The men in my class, some of them start with very negative attitudes and sit in class with this smug look on their face, very skeptical." Another gave the following example: "Every once in a while you get what I call a 'smirker,' somebody who just sits in the back of the room and has this wide smirking expression on his face. I've had women, but more often men doing this." Both women handled this problem by ignoring it, and in most cases students eventually stopped.

Men at the assistant level encountered verbal challenges more frequently. Their response was to divert the challenge to another time and place, usually a later discussion in their office. The following is one example given by a man in the humanities:

> "I had one student, very bright, very nice fellow. But he kept attacking me for being anti-Soviet. I said, 'OK. That's fair if you want to attack me from that point of view. Why don't you read this? Come in and we'll discuss it and see what happens'."

At the associate level both women and men reported verbal challenges from students. Women tended to handle this in class with a considerable amount of patience, even when they felt the student was clearly wrong. The following presents two examples:

> "I thought that this course would never get off the ground. I dialogued with him every day, not all period, but once every day for three weeks. During the third week he finally began to realize what I was trying to say. It was a hassle." (social science)

> "Once in a while you get sort of a smart-alec. Usually, if you give them enough rope, they'll hang themselves. The rest of the class will start laughing at them." (humanities)

On the other hand, men associate professors were more likely to handle challenges, not by discussing them, but by explaining how the student was wrong or inaccurate. This usually involved responding to the challenge with a defense of their own position:

> "He challenged things like the dates. I said, 'I know they are the dates because I just put this lecture together.' He said, 'No, you're wrong.' I said, 'Well, I don't think I'm wrong.' It went on like this so I finally said, 'Look, I know I'm right...if you'd like to come to my office I'll show you books and articles that I used to draw up my lectures.' (humanities)

"I try to explain why it is that certain opinions are inadequate or incorrect, and that there are all different levels of interpretation, and at certain levels you can say that this is right and this is wrong. (humanities)

Full professors encountered verbal challenges less frequently but a few instances were mentioned by the women. In these cases the challenges came during the first few days of classes and were responded to directly and immediately. One woman, teaching a course about science reported that she always receives a few challenges at the beginning from male science majors. Another woman in the hard sciences also reported initial resistance until she is able to demonstrate her experience and expertise in the classroom. Both women characterized these instances as minor testing behaviors that were routinely and quickly dealt with.

Challenges to competency, therefore, were experienced by women at all ranks. Female assistant professors welcomed these challenges as long as they were direct; however, even though they worried about the indirect ones, they handled them by ignoring them. Associate women used class time to discuss the issues with the students and full professors quickly stopped the challenges.

Male professors at the assistant and associate ranks, but not at the full rank, reported challenges to their competency. Assistant

males would divert the challenger and request s/he come to his office later to discuss the differences. Associates, on the other hand, would tell the student in class why his/her ideas were inadequate or wrong.

Lack of Student Participation

The fourth management problem involved situations in which students were reluctant or unwilling to participate in classroom professor/student interaction. This occurred when students failed to engage in class discussions, asked no questions, or made no comments concerning the material they were learning. Since all of the professors described their teaching styles as involving at least one of these types of interaction, the potential for this problem was present in every case.**

At the assistant professor level none of the women reported problems with eliciting student interaction in the classroom. In fact, several felt that their female status encouraged student input. As one woman in the social sciences explained: "I really do think that one of the reasons students are more open to asking questions...(is) because I'm a woman." Another in the Humanities commented, "I'm very concerned about how my students are feeling, how they're reacting with

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**The analysis revealed differences related to sex and rank but not discipline or sex-ratio of departments.

each other and me. I think that's very much because women are taught to think about it and worry about it and men aren't as much."

Men assistant professors tended to describe the opposite situation. They felt that their status as male hindered professor/student interaction and mentioned several strategies designed to de-emphasize their authoritativeness. These strategies included joking with the students ("I use a little humor to break the ice"), using relaxed body language ("To promote class discussion...my usual style is to sit on top of the desk cross-legged or lotus position or legs hanging"), and dressing informally ("I don't wear coats and ties"). Some of the men articulated the conflict they felt between expectations that they be authoritative as well as open to students' spontaneous ideas and questions. A social science professor described this as "an anomoly for males" since they are expected to behave authoritatively and still be responsive to students "rather than just saying 'Well here it is. Take it or leave it'."

At the associate level, women professors were unanimous in their enthusiasm for an interactive classroom teaching style. Some used it exclusively while others combined it with lecturing. Absent from these women's comments were mentions of special techniques used to "break the ice" or problems getting students to talk in class. In addition, all the women mentioned that they enjoyed the "give and take" of classroom interaction.

Men associate professors also elicited student interaction, but here a different attitude was apparent. The men were more likely to view class discussions and student comments as something they should encourage rather than something they enjoyed and wanted to encourage. In the words of one chemistry professor:

> "In an honors course of fifteen students you get lots of feedback, and in a course of two hundred students you may have to point a finger, but I do it. It's worth wasting ten minutes out of an hour lecture to get feedback from the students." (Emphasis ours.)

In addition, associate males, like the assistant males, felt that their position as an authority constrained student/professor interaction. The professors mentioned various ways they managed this conflict. One man in the Humanities who felt his students were frightened of him tried to counter this by dressing informally and allowing students a large amount of time to make their comments. Another in the social sciences explained:

> "I try to get to class early and try to talk with different students before class begins, just to be there...(to) introduce elements of informal exchange."

At the level of full professor few difficulties with eliciting interaction were mentioned. Two of the women said they only experienced

this problem when students were unprepared, and most of the men did not mention this issue. However, two of the men did note that it had become harder for them to relate to students rather than vice versa, although they tried to do so. One man explained:

> "When I came here as a young instructor I had a much easier rapport with students. Then I found as I became an associate and a full professor, was on university senate, was a publishing scholar, there was a gap created by my status...The students sort of detect that what I really want to do is get home into my study and write."

In summary then, females regardless of rank, disciplinary orientation or sex-ratio report no management problem in terms of getting students involved in discussion. Assistant and associate professor males view their status as males and authority figures as having a dampening effect on classroom interactions, and some full male professors saw themselves as having difficulty relating to the students.

DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

According to theoretical expectations, females rather than males should devise strategies through which they can simultaneously increase the legitimacy of their authority and reduce its appearance, whereas males will have greater latitude in devising strategies since they

operate from a position of granted authority. To explore this question, fifteen female faculty members were matched to fifteen male faculty members and interviewed regarding authority management issues in the classroom. After discussing differences in their perceptions of their authority, four classroom issues were examined: inattentiveness of students; disruption of the classroom by students; challenges to competency; and lack of student participation.

No differences based on sex-ratio or disciplinary orientation emerged. However, rank and sex were related to the responses of faculty to management problems. At the assistant and associate levels, females used strategies (ignoring, gently reprimanding, encouraging discussion of professor/student differences) that, in effect, reduced their appearance of authority as they attempted to legitimate it. In contrast, the male assistants and associates reprimanded publically and harshly, directly corrected students' misconceptions, and "point-proved" outside of the classroom. That is, the males were less hesitant to display their legitimacy as authorities and used strategies that, even when similar to the females, were more direct and potentially humiliating to the students. In addition, males rather than females, reported having difficulty in getting students to participate or in relating to them. Thus, although males saw their authority as having a dampening effect on students, they nevertheless used it to maintain control in classroom management situations.

From the material it appears that the strategies employed by males and females at the lower ranks are different, and that these strategies are consistent with our hypotheses. However, because these differences do not persist throughout the ranks, it would appear that the consequences of sex-saliency for role performances are conditioned or modified by other variables. Put another way, we might ask why male and female full professors experience their roles more similarly than their junior colleagues.

Chronological age, in the case of this sample, will not explain the differences since some of the full professors were younger than the assistants and associates. Even amount of teaching experience is not an apparent explanatory variable, for again, some senior faculty had taught less than some assistants and associates. Further, faculty members' reports that most students do not know the differences in academic ranks suggests that our results are not attributable to differential prestige ratings.

Rather, it is suggested that what the full professors share in common is that they, as indicated even by the connotation of their title, have been <u>fully</u> accepted as members of the academic community. That is, they have achieved the highest position possible within the academic ranking system. Saying that, of course, raises new questions for further research, namely: What is there about the <u>structure</u>

of the university that allows males and females to experience the classroom similarly only when full professorship has been obtained?; and, What is there about the experience of being a full professor that contributes to these similarities?

NOTES

1. William J. Goode, "A Theory of Role Strain," American Sociological Review 25(1960): 483-496; Robert K. Merton and Elinor Barber, "Sociological Ambivalence," in Sociological Theory, Values, and Socio-culture Change, ed. Edward A. Tiryakian (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963).

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